



STEWARDS ACADEMY

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ATTENDANCE & PUNCTUALITY POLICY

PRINCIPLES

In order for children to be able to succeed at school, we have an expectation that they must arrive punctually at school and to lessons and attend school on a regular basis.

Much emphasis will be placed upon the recognition of the significance of full attendance in order to enable children to fulfil their potential. It is vital for pupils to see that all staff - tutors, subject staff, Pastoral Staff, senior staff, and the Attendance Manager, encourage and recognise good levels of attendance and give the appropriate support to those pupils who may have some difficulty with their punctuality and attendance. As a school, we seek to work in partnership with our parents in order to provide the necessary level of support and guidance to those pupils, parents and families who may need it.

It is important for all pupils, parents and staff to be clear about what the procedures and systems are for monitoring punctuality and attendance. We must all have high expectations and work towards achieving this in a positive partnership, in order that our pupils get the best possible advantages from their school experience. It is however to be noted pupils that do have poor attendance will not be permitted to attend school trips.

Essex Code of Conduct for Penalty Notices

The **Essex Code of Conduct for Penalty Notices** has agreed to use penalty notices for the following circumstances:

- A penalty notice may be issued if 10 unauthorised absences have occurred during a 10 week period.
- A penalty notice may be issued if there are at least 6 or more consecutive unauthorised sessions due to a holiday taken during the first two weeks of September
- A penalty notice may be issued if a child excluded from school is found in a public place during normal school hours on the first five days of each and every fixed period or permanent exclusion.

GUIDELINES

Clinically Extremely Vulnerable

Most children originally identified as clinically extremely vulnerable no longer need to follow this advice and so can attend school. Families should seek advice from their GP or specialist clinician, to understand whether their child/ren should still be classed as clinically extremely vulnerable.

Those children whose doctors have confirmed they are still clinically extremely vulnerable are advised not to attend school while this advice is in place. Appropriate arrangements for these pupils will be put in place to continue their education at home.

Children/young people who live with someone who is clinically extremely vulnerable should attend school. The guidance for individuals who are deemed clinically extremely vulnerable applies to those individuals only. Children/young people living in a household with someone who is clinically extremely vulnerable are not advised to follow this guidance and should attend school.

Self-Isolating

Due to COVID-19 pupils may be required to self-isolate for a number of different reasons. If pupils are required to self-isolate then the school will require evidence for the attendance records.

For example:

- evidence of a COVID-19 test positive or negative.
- evidence that a pupil has travelled abroad this may include boarding passes or booking confirmation that includes the dates a pupil travelled.

Pupils may also be sent home to self-isolate after coming into close proximity with another pupil who has tested positive for COVID-19. Blended Learning Booklets and work set on ClassCharts would need to be completed by all pupils who are self-isolating, unless they to become ill and develop symptoms themselves.

Pupils that are affected by self-isolation will be registered as working at home.

RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE PUPILS

1. Attend school punctually and regularly in order to keep up with the requirements of the school curriculum.
2. Be responsible for maintaining their own high level of attendance (at least School target or above – 96%).
3. Bring an absence note to school on return from an absence which is passed straight to the Attendance Office.
4. Pupils arriving after their start time on three occasions per half term without a note from a parent or medical appointment card will be directed to Afternoon Prep for 30 minutes on the third occasion and every occasion after that for the rest of the half term.
5. If a pupil is late, they must sign in at the pupil entrance.
6. Ensure that they make up any work missed while they were absent.

RESPONSIBILITIES OF PARENTS

1. Understand that it is their legal responsibility to ensure that their children attend school punctually and on a regular basis unless there is an acceptable reason and see themselves as partners with the school in the education of their children.
2. Only the school, within the context of the law, can approve absence, NOT parents (as laid down in the guidelines of the DFES).

3. Parents must understand that the only reasons for authorised absence are the following:-
 - self-isolating as a result of being in close proximity of another pupil with a positive Covid case. Parents would need to work in collaboration with our staff to ensure that the Blended Learning Booklets and ClassCharts work is being completed by those pupils self-isolating.
 - genuine illness
 - being prevented from attending school by any unavoidable cause
 - as a result of a religious observance by pupil's parents – must be requested in writing to the Attendance Office prior to event
 - if the school is not within walking distance of the child's home (3 miles) and arrangements have not been made by the local authority for the child's transport to and from school
 - medical and dental appointments (a whole day's absence is not acceptable and parents should aim to arrange such appointments so as to minimise disruption to the school day) – supported by an appointment letter/card
 - family bereavement
 - to participate in approved public performances
 - job interviews
 - exclusion
 - Pupils with attendance which falls below the school target of 96% may not be permitted to attend school trips of a recreational nature.
4. Telephone or email the Attendance Office by 9.00am and leave a message on the first day of a pupil's absence stating the **exact** reason for the absence and contact school for each day of absence thereafter. Failure to contact the school could result in a home visit from a member of staff to ascertain the reason for the absence, this is in order to safeguard the welfare of all pupils.
5. Send an absence note to the Attendance Office when their child returns to school. The note should state a reason for the absence, it does not authorise it.
6. Work closely with the school staff in the instance of truancy from lessons/school, in order to discover the reason(s) why and work to ensure that this does not happen again.
7. Not condone their child's absence from school unless there is a legitimate reason.
8. Provide medical evidence to support absence from school after 3 days of illness when requested.
9. If you have taken your child to the doctor we need evidence to support this regarding your child's illness (this can take the form of a compliment slip stamped by the surgery, a copy of the prescription or bringing the prescribed medication into school to show a member of the Attendance Team.)
10. Contact the school if you unsure whether your child should or should not be in school with certain medical conditions.
11. Students can return to school 24 hours after their last bout of sickness and diarrhoea.

LEAVE OF ABSENCE

Pupils are not entitled to take holidays during term time. If exceptional circumstances arise (this is a leave of absence which we at Stewards Academy feel would be of unique and significant emotional, educational or spiritual value to the pupil which outweighs the loss of teaching time) parents/carers must apply by letter to the Attendance Office before any booking is made. Leave of

absence is considered on a case-by-case basis and a written response from the Attendance Office will be provided. Should any further leave of absence be taken you will be referred to the Missing Education and Child Employment Team at Essex county Council for a Penalty Notice to be issued.

Parents have no legal right to leave of absence in term time. If a holiday is not authorised, and is taken without permission, the Missing Education and Child Employment Service may issue a Penalty Notice to each parent of £60 for each child to be paid within 21 days. If the penalty is not paid within the timescale the penalty will increase to £120. If the higher penalty is not paid within 28 days, the Missing Education and Child Employment Service will then institute legal proceedings against you in the magistrate's court under Section 444 of the Education Act 1996 for failing to ensure your child attends school regularly.

The following absences will be considered "approved educational activity".

- work experience
- off-site educational tuition
- school trips
- study leave

The following are not classed as reasons to be absent from school and if taken will result in an unauthorised mark and could result in further action being taken.

- Birthdays
- Shopping or any other social outing
- Truancy – missing whole days off school or individual lessons is not acceptable and will have serious disciplinary consequences
- Looking after a relative or pet
- Day trips
- Head lice
- Meeting relatives
- Family Weddings/events – unless compassionate
- Remaining at home to wait for deliveries, repair men etc
- Any absence immediately before or after a designated school closure will be marked as an unauthorised absence unless medical evidence is provided for the period of absence.

RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE FORM TUTOR

1. Arrive punctually to registration in order to set a good example. ~~(by 8.55am).~~
2. A telephone call should be made by the tutor if there are particular concerns about a pupil's attendance in consultation with the Attendance Office.
3. All absence notes should be read, signed, dated and handed in to the Attendance Office on the day they are received.
4. Liaise with subject staff, ~~Pastoral Lead~~, Pastoral Support, and Attendance Manager regarding any concerns.
5. Counsel and advise pupils as appropriate.
6. Deal sensitively with pupils who are absent as a result of long term illness or family problems. Keep in contact with such pupils when at home and welcome them back to school warmly to show how much they are valued. Liaise with subject staff on their behalf if necessary.
7. Monitor pupils on attendance report if necessary.

8. Keep the Attendance Office informed of any pupil information relevant to absence.

RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE SUBJECT TEACHER

1. Arrive punctually to lessons to set a good example.
2. Take an accurate register electronically at the beginning of each lesson (within the first 15 minutes) and monitor any absences. If unable to register electronically must request a paper register and return to Attendance Office at the start of the lesson.
3. Recognise regular attendance with praise.
4. Inform the Attendance Office/Tutor of any concerns re: attendance/punctuality.
5. Ensure that pupils who have been absent due to long term illness or family problems are given adequate support (work sent home etc.) and that such pupils are welcomed back into a supportive classroom environment with extra help given if necessary.
6. Consult with Attendance Officer if any further action needed.

RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE PASTORAL SUPPORT MENTOR

1. Work in conjunction with Attendance Team to monitor and take appropriate action with regard to Persistent Absence pupils.
2. Liaise closely with tutors regarding any concerns.
3. Meet with pupils and parents as appropriate and keep staff informed of any relevant information.
4. Collect and collate information specifically involving unauthorised absence, inform parents and deal with pupils as appropriate.
5. Place pupils on attendance report if necessary.
6. Recognise good attendance wherever possible.
7. Give appropriate support to pupils who are absent through long term illness or family problems - make phone calls and ensure the child is welcomed back into a supportive environment.

RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE SENIOR MEMBER OF STAFF (FOR ATTENDANCE)

1. Oversee the implementation of the Whole School Attendance and Punctuality policy.
2. Liaise with Pastoral Support Staff and Attendance Manager as appropriate.
3. Monitor whole school attendance statistics and work with all staff to ensure minimum 96% attendance.
4. Inform Governors on attendance data as necessary and attend meetings as necessary.

RESPONSIBILITIES OF PASTORAL SUPPORT STAFF

1. Support the Deputy Headteacher (Pastoral) in ensuring the attendance of pupils meets the academy targets as set out in the school plan, by monitoring the attendance of all pupils, and ensuring appropriate action takes place to address poor attendance.
2. Organise, manage and lead the Attendance Team (Attendance Manager and Attendance Officer).
3. Chair a weekly meeting with the Attendance Manager to discuss pupils with poor attendance and agree action plans.
4. Monitor whole school attendance statistics and work with all staff to ensure minimum 96% attendance.
5. Monitor the impact of all action plans and revise as necessary.

6. Conduct meetings with appropriate staff in relation to pupils whose attendance is showing a concern.
7. Identify PA pupils who need specialised intervention and refer these to Pastoral Support.
8. Carry out home visits when necessary.
9. Monitor registers and meet with appropriate Staff and Governors regularly to promote high rates of attendance and punctuality.
10. Meet with the Deputy Headteacher (Pastoral) to discuss attendance issues, so that he has a thorough knowledge of the academy's attendance.

RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE ATTENDANCE MANAGER AND ATTENDANCE OFFICER

1. Regular liaison with the Attendance Manager, the Attendance Officer and the PSM responsible for Safeguarding and Attendance.
2. The Attendance Officer will make first day calls and texts depending on pupil circumstances.
3. The Attendance Officer will record reasons for pupils absence and inform Attendance Manager.
4. Attendance Manager will attend Afternoon Prep. to speak to those pupils who have been issued a prep for x3 late marks in a term.
5. Attendance Manager will liaise with Attendance Officer and appropriate Pastoral Staff re home visits. On some occasions Attendance Manager will make home visits with Pastoral Support Staff.
6. Attendance Officer will monitor all pupil absence, record data and Attendance Manager will decide on appropriate action.
7. Attendance Manager will contact parents by phone or letter when attendance falls below the school target of 96% when considered necessary.
8. Attendance Manager will implement reward systems and promote excellent attendance and punctuality in assemblies and on school website.
9. Attendance Manager and Attendance Officer will monitor closely pupils whose attendance falls below school target of 96%.
10. Attendance Manager will monitor pupils who fall into Persistent Absence category and work with Pastoral Support to action appropriate interventions.
11. If attendance continues to be a concern with a pupil, the Attendance Manager will initiate the following actions
 - Stage 1 – a letter of concern will go home to parents / carers
 - Stage 2 – if there is no improvement, parents / carers will be invited into school for a meeting with the Attendance Manager and Pastoral Support Staff.
 - Stage 3 – if there is still no improvement the Attendance Manager will contact the parents / carers to inform them that a Penalty Notice will be implemented. The pupils attendance will then be monitored for the requisite period of 10 weeks as per the Essex Code of Conduct for Penalty Notices.